

California Public Utilities Commission – CEQA Process

**Imperial Valley Study Group
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**Susan Lee
Aspen Environmental Group
(415) 955-4775 x203
SLee@AspenEG.com**

CPUC Review Process for Transmission Lines

- **The CPUC's process includes two parallel reviews for an Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity (CPCN):**
 - **General Proceeding**
An Administrative Law Judge and one of the 5 CPUC Commissioners are assigned to each case
 - **Environmental Review (the CEQA Process)**
A Project Manager is assigned from the Energy Division's CEQA Unit

CPUC Process

General Proceeding	Environmental Review
CPCN Application filed	Proponent's Environmental Assessment filed with application
ALJ holds a Pre-Hearing Conference	Application reviewed for completeness
Scoping Memo for General Proceeding	Notice of Preparation for EIR
Testimony Exchanged	Public Scoping for EIR
Evidentiary Hearings	Draft EIR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45 Day Comment Period• Public Consultation
ALJ's Proposed Decision	Final EIR
Final Decision of ALJ Full Commission vote	EIR Certified by CPUC <i>Generally at same time as Commission vote on project approval/denial</i>

General Proceeding for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN)

Led by:

- An Assigned Commissioner and an assigned Administrative Law Judge

Scope of General Proceeding (defined by Public Utilities Code Section 1002):

- Determine need for the project (facilities are necessary to promote the safety, health, comfort, and convenience of the public)
- Consider community values, recreational and park areas, historic and aesthetic values.
- Review environmental impacts as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

Environmental Review

- CPUC is the “Lead Agency” under CEQA for conducting the environmental review of transmission lines proposed by regulated utilities

Objectives:

- Assess potential impacts of the proposed project and the alternatives
- Identify ways to avoid or reduce impacts, including examination of alternatives and mitigation measures

The Contents & Purpose of an EIR

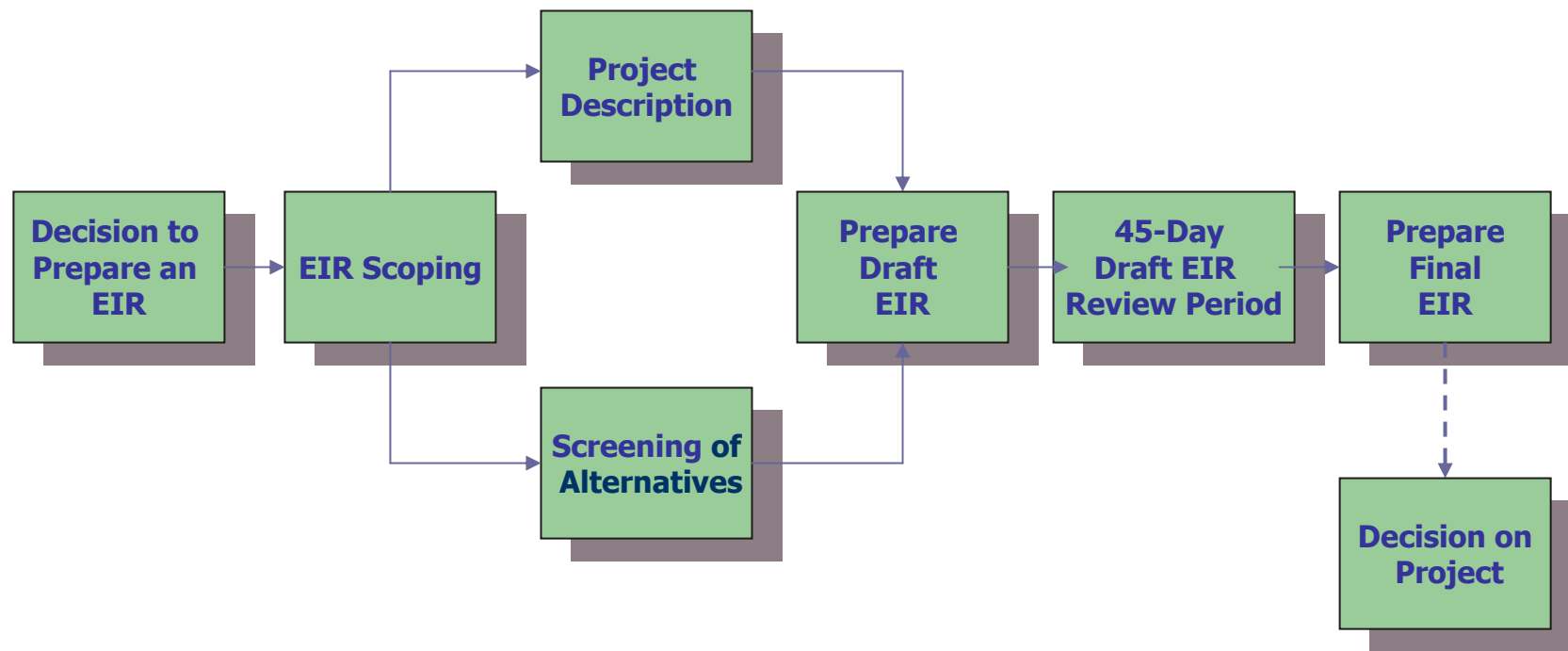
Contents:

- Describe the environmental setting of the project area
- Disclose the potential environmental impacts of the project and alternatives
- Propose measures to reduce or avoid significant environmental impacts (mitigation measures)

Purpose:

- Provide technically sound information for decision-makers to consider in evaluating the proposed project

The EIR Process: 6-18 months long



After EIR Completion

- Commission vote on Proposed Decision may occur soon after Final EIR is issued or after a few months; timing depends on need for evidentiary hearings
- EIR is referenced in the Decision
- If the project or an alternative is approved, the Decision will require monitoring of adopted mitigation measures and definition of mitigation monitoring procedures.